Then you touched upon roads and canals. All these you yourselves say will go to the boards to be newly constituted for dealing with roads and canals. Then as regards the *todu* you mentioned, the matter is under correspondence with the Chief Engineer.

In regard to co-operation, I shall place your suggestions on record so that they may come under consideration when the question of any changes in the Co-operative Department is considered. In regard to the particular society you mentioned I shall ask the Registrar to look into the matter.

184. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

MR. M. N. GOVINDA PILLAI (*Member, Kartikapally taluk*) said that the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly should be given a statutory basis. At present it depended for its existence on a mere executive order of the Government.

In regard to the election of members of the Assembly every person who paid a tax of Rs. 25 should be declared eligible to vote at the elections. The franchise should besides be extended to women.

The procedure for the holding of elections should be remodelled. Provision should be made for the presentation of nomination papers by intending candidates, polling of votes *etc.* Voting should be by ballot. Detailed rules should be made for the opening of ballot boxes and counting of votes.

The term of life of each Assembly should be fixed at three years.

The Assembly should be allowed to debate and vote upon all representations of general importance.

Copies of the Government Gazette should be supplied free to members of the Assembly, as was being done formerly.

Members of the Assembly should be given the power of attesting powers of attorney and of administering oaths on affidavits.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Govinda Pillai, I will give a collective answer to all representations on the subject of the reconstitution of the Assembly.

185. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

MR. NARAYANA PILLAI KRISHNA PILLAI (*Member, Kunnatnad taluk, Group I*) said that the Assembly should be given a statutory basis. The Legislative Council should be made responsible to the Assembly for its actions. The Assembly should be given the right of (*a*) debating and voting upon the principles underlying bills of general importance presented in the Legislative Council, the decision of the Assembly on any such bill being binding on the Council; (*b*) passing resolutions on political and financial questions, such resolutions when confirmed by the Legislative Council being binding on Government; (*c*) asking questions; and (*d*) holding general discussions on the annual Budget estimates.

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Women also should be allowed to vote at elections to the Assembly. Nominations to the Assembly should be made only to give representation to minority communities which had otherwise failed to secure representation. Copies of the Government Gazette should be supplied to members of the Assembly as in olden days.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Krishna Pillai, I will give a collective answer to all the representations on the subject of the reconstitution of the Assembly.

186. Advancement of local self-government in the State.

MR. A. NAYANAR (*Member, Municipal Council, Nagercoil*) pointed out that the administration of many municipalities was suffering for want of sufficient enthusiasm on the part of the members of the councils. They were sometimes influenced by personal considerations, while at other times they were very apathetic in their attitude towards the working of the councils. In the Nagercoil municipality, for instance, when an encroachment had to be removed, the person affected approached some members and influenced them to take sides with him. The result was a split in the Council and the encroachment could not be got removed. These and similar incidents perhaps pointed to the defective nature of the Municipal Regulation. It might be made a condition that only members who have had at least three years' experience should be eligible for election as presidents and vice-pesidents of municipal councils. That would ensure that persons who had some kind of administrative experience would alone come up to fill these places.

A central office should be opened where municipal subordinates should be given training in public health, sanitation etc.

Self-governing bodies should be established in all parts of the State.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Nayanar, you dwelt upon various points connected with the administration of Municipalities. You deplore the fact that members are influenced, or apathetic, and will not take trouble, and as an illustration you mentioned an instance when an encroachment had to be removed and immediately the person affected approached certain of the members of the Municipal Council, created a split in the Council and prevented the necessary work being carried out. These are indications, not of the defects in the Municipal Regulation or of the rules under it, but this is entirely due to lack of responsibility, I might even say of true civic spirit, which has not yet risen to its full height in the matter of municipal administration. You suggest that the chairman and vice-chairman should serve at least for three years as members on the ordinary body of the Council before they are entrusted with the duties of chairman and vice-chairman. The reason you gave for this is that they are lacking in administrative experience. Administrative experience in matters such as this is after all simply only the possession of business and common sense. And a man with

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